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ABSTRACT

This checklist was produced to assist in the inspection and reporting process of the environmental dimension of schools. The term 'environmental dimension' is used to include both the curriculum and the context within which it is delivered. The checklist outlines the main features of the environmental dimension and makes some suggestions as to where in the inspection framework they could be reported. The checklist includes: (1) planned opportunities for out-of-classroom learning; (2) creative use of the school buildings and grounds; (3) study of environmental issues in the curriculum; and (4) the involvement of pupils in environmental decision-making.

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Inspecting the Environmental Dimension of Schools

A Checklist for School Inspectors

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Council for Environmental Education

Enriching lives and lifelong learning

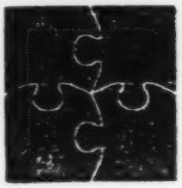
Raising standards of achievement

Developing active and responsible citizenship

Leading to sustainable development

The aims and purposes of environmental education

Introduction



THIS CHECKLIST has been produced to assist the school inspection and reporting process. The term *environmental dimension* is used to include both the curriculum and the context within which it is delivered. This context includes a wide range of formal and informal activities. The checklist outlines the main features of the *environmental dimension* (eg Environmental Management) and makes some suggestions as to where in the inspection framework they could be reported (e.g. 6.1; 6.3).

Inspecting the *environmental dimension* is quite manageable within the present inspection time-scale. No extra personnel or specialist knowledge is required. However, the Registered Inspector will need to consider how best to co-ordinate the team.

Sources of Evidence

Inspectors will need to take account of school councils, extra-curricular activities, collective worship, break times, special projects, exhibitions around the school, visits and fieldwork in building up a picture of a school's work.
On the opposite page is a list of evidence for the basis of judgements within each aspect of the framework.

The Curriculum
(5.2)

The School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA) detailed the "requirements" and "opportunities" to teach about environmental matters in the subject orders. There are "requirements" in geography, science, design and technology, art and physical education. There are "opportunities" in all subjects (see *Teaching environmental matters through the national curriculum*, SCAA, 1996). Personal and Social Education (PSE) provides further opportunities for developing values and attitudes in relation to the environment. (The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is preparing guidance for schools on spiritual, moral, social and cultural values.)

Co-ordination and Planning
(5.2)

The school may co-ordinate and plan environmental work across the curriculum. There may also be a co-ordinator for environmental education.

Policies and Codes
(3.1; 4.2; 5.1; 6.1)

The school may have policies or codes for environmental education and/or for environmental management.

Fieldwork and Out-of-School Learning
(5.1; 5.5; 6.2)

The school should have a planned programme of fieldwork or study visits. Out-of-school learning may act as a stimulus for work in more than one subject or cross-curricular area. These visits and studies may also contain a residential component which contributes to pupils' personal and social development.

Environmental Improvements
(5.3; 6.2)

The school may make changes to its physical environment (school grounds, buildings etc), or to the way its existing environment is used. These changes, and pupil involvement in the process, can improve the provision for learning, recreation and behaviour management.

Environmental Management
(6.1; 6.3)

The school may be using a process of monitoring and improving its own environmental performance. This may include trying to reduce its consumption of energy, water or other materials. It may also include recycling and cutting waste. The process of environmental management may be being used as an educational activity.

Pupil Involvement
(5.1; 6.1)

Pupils may be involved in drawing up policies and codes. There may be a school committee or council involving pupils, staff and others in monitoring and improving the environmental performance of the school. Pupils may be involved in environmental activities (eg Local Agenda 21) in the local community.

School Linking
(5.2; 5.3)

The school may have links with others, nationally or internationally. Pupils may be exchanging information and comparing attitudes and values towards the environment with pupils from different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.

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OFSTED Inspection Framework

3.1 Characteristics of the school

4.1 Attainment and progress

4.2 Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

4.3 Attendance

5.1 Teaching

5.2 The curriculum and assessment

5.3 Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

5.4 Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

5.5 Partnerships with parents and the community

6.1 Leadership and management

6.2 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

6.3 The efficiency of the school

Evidence of the Environmental Dimension

Judgements should be based on the extent to which:

Environmental values are contained within the stated aims of the school;
the physical environment and/or ethos of the school influence standards.

Outcomes

Attainment and progress are consistent across the key delivery subjects;
attainment and progress are raised by first hand learning in the environment.

Pupils react positively to, and show respect for, their surroundings;
pupils' behaviour is consistent within and beyond the classroom;
pupils show initiative and take responsibility for environmental matters;
pupils are aware of and act on the environmental policies of the school;
pupils show empathy with others and debate issues openly.

The quality of the school environment encourages attendance.

Contributory Factors: Provision

The use of the environment enhances the quality of teaching;
the contributions of specialist areas strengthen environmental understanding;
the environment is used as a context to develop and consolidate skills;
teachers are confident in handling controversial environmental issues;
methods encourage pupils to learn directly from their surroundings.

Schemes of work for all subjects address environmental matters;
there is a planned approach to work across the curriculum;
PSE reinforces positive values and attitudes to the environment;
assessment includes recording of environmental aspects of pupils' achievements.

The school promotes positive values and attitudes to the environment;
the school enriches pupils' awareness, understanding and empathy;
pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for environmental matters.

The physical environment and behaviour management promote well being;
health and safety policies/procedures support study beyond the classroom;
the school values and celebrates pupils' environmental achievements.

Local issues and concerns are used as a stimulus for curriculum work;
pupils' work contributes to the resolution of local issues/Agenda 21 processes;
pupils are encouraged to apply environmental values beyond the school;
the physical environment of the school is welcoming to parents and visitors.

Contributory Factors: Management

There is clear and effective management/co-ordination of environmental education;
policies/plans incorporate an environmental dimension;
polices/plans are actively supported by all staff through management and practice.

There are plans for the development of school buildings and grounds;
professional development needs in environmental education are being met;
the school buildings, grounds and locality are used as learning resources.

Efficient use is made of its grounds, buildings and human resources;
efficient use is made of consumable resources (eg energy, water, paper);
the school makes good use of external sources of expertise and financial support.

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Notes and record sheet

This sheet may be photocopied and used by team members in reporting to the inspector responsible for this aspect.

- **Planned opportunities for out-of-classroom learning**

- **Creative use of the school buildings and grounds**

- **Study of environmental issues in the curriculum**

- **Development of positive values and attitudes through PSE programmes**

- **The ethos, practices and extra-curricular activities of the school**

- **The involvement of pupils and others in environmental decision-making**

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